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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#) [AF](#) [UK](#)  
SUBJECT: SUDAN/DARFUR: LONDON'S INITIAL REACTIONS TO  
DISCUSSION OF UNSC RESOLUTION

REF: A. USUN 272  
[1](#)B. STATE 26373

Classified By: Political Counselor Richard Mills, reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) According to UK Special Representative for Sudan Michael O'Neill and Sudan Unit Deputy Bruce Bucknell, the UK remains opposed to UN Security Council action on the situation in Darfur, as described reftel A, for the reasons listed below. O'Neill said UK Government officials plan to seek ministerial approval to continue opposing any UN action on Darfur at this time.

- UN action at this point - when Government of Sudan (GoS) flexibility may still be possible - may harden the GoS's position even further, causing even more limited access in Darfur.

- There is no clear idea of what a resolution will achieve. In particular, O'Neill noted to Poloff that a no-fly zone, when previously examined, had been determined to be unfeasible to implement and possibly detrimental to UNAMID activities.

- Moving forward with a UNSC resolution will likely trigger a strong resurgence of calls for an Article 16 deferment of President Bashir's International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment for "humanitarian reasons," putting the UK in a difficult position between support for the ICC and humanitarian relief in Darfur.

- An OCHA briefing should precede any action in the UN so that the Council can act with a full understanding of the humanitarian situation on the ground and the real-term impact of the NGOs' expulsion.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Bucknell noted there is a P5 Foreign Ministers meeting in London on April 1, and the Sudan Unit is pressing for Darfur to be on the agenda. Bucknell suggested the Foreign Ministers' meeting would be an ideal opportunity to "squeeze the Chinese."

Comment  
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[1](#)3. (C/NF) The UK generally prefers a "constructive engagement" approach when dealing with Sudan's National Congress Party (NCP) and thinks that a policy of engagement has led to greater regime flexibility than more hard-edged approaches. The UK continues to try to de-link the ICC indictment from the humanitarian situation and wants to avoid P3 isolation on this issue, especially with the current strong Arab League-African Union consensus opposing the indictment (reftel B).

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